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# Relationship between disarmament and development

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/48. It summarizes the activities undertaken by the United Nations in implementing the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development as well as activities related to the recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development (see A/59/119). The report also contains information received from Governments on the subject.

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# I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/48, in which the Assembly recalled the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development (see A/59/119), and requested the Secretary-General to continue to take action, through appropriate organs and within available resources, for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. The General Assembly invited Member States to provide information regarding measures and efforts to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development, with a view to reducing the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries. This information is contained in section IV below.

3. In paragraph 1 of resolution 62/48 the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the disarmament and development relationship, in particular the high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development, in order to ensure continued and effective coordination and close cooperation between the relevant United Nations departments, agencies and sub-agencies. The Steering Group has designated focal points at the working level, as previously reported (see A/60/94), and has been discussing the issue. Significant divergent views between States have resulted in a limited response from Member States. In 2008, only five Member States have provided information on the measures related to the relationship between disarmament and development. Without the expression of support and interest by Member States, the Steering Group will continue to be limited in its ability to take further decisive action and to commit the necessary resources to this issue.

# II. Action taken by the United Nations to implement the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development

## A. Monitoring/comparison of military expenditures

4. The United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures was introduced by General Assembly resolution 35/142 B as an important instrument to enhance transparency. The instrument aggregates and publishes data on expenditures on personnel, operations and procurement. It collects information on military expenditures submitted voluntarily by Member States and publishes this annually, through a consolidated report to the General Assembly. All information on military expenditures submitted since its inception in 1981 is publicly accessible. Currently, the Secretariat is not mandated to monitor and analyse the trends in military expenditures nor their impact on the world economy and international security. A review of the operation and further development of the Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures will be undertaken by

a group of governmental experts, which is to be established by the Secretary-General and which is scheduled to commence its work in 2010.[1]

## B. Public information

5. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has devoted several issues of its quarterly journal *Disarmament Forum* to linkages between disarmament and development and to the exploration of related themes.[2] The relevant issues are available, in both English and French, at www.unidir.org. Recent publications of the Institute have examined the negative impact of cluster munitions and small arms on development.[3]

## C. International humanitarian law

6. There is ever-increasing concern over the humanitarian effects of cluster munitions. The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects is addressing the issue through its Group of Governmental Experts, which is currently negotiating a proposal to address the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions, while striking a balance between military and humanitarian considerations. The Group held meetings in January and April 2008 and is expected to hold three more meetings before it reports on progress made to the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties in 2008.

7. A State-led initiative originating from the Oslo Conference on Cluster Munitions, held in February 2007, culminated in the adoption of a draft convention on cluster munitions at the Dublin Diplomatic Conference in May 2008. This new convention would address the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions and enhance the protection of civilians, strengthen human rights and improve prospects for development.

8. The tenth anniversary of the signing of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction was held in 2007. Originally signed by 122 States, the treaty now has 156 States parties.

9. In 2004 UNIDIR launched a project entitled "Disarmament as humanitarian action: making multilateral negotiations work", with the support of the Governments of the Netherlands and Norway. The objective of the project, which is ongoing, is to analyse and compare different negotiating processes, reframe multilateral disarmament negotiation processes in humanitarian terms and formulate practical proposals to apply humanitarian concepts to assist disarmament negotiators. To date, the project has produced three publications, drawn from a range of contributors in

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[1] See resolution 62/13.

[2] "The Peacebuilding Commission", *Disarmament Forum*, No. 2, 2007; "Cluster Munitions", *Disarmament Forum*, No. 4, 2007.

[3] See, for example, UNIDIR, *International Assistance for Implementing the United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects: Case Study of East Africa* (Geneva, 2007); and UNIDIR, *The Humanitarian Impact of Cluster Munitions* (Geneva, 2008).

civil society, diplomacy and the policy and research fields.[4] The publications examine current difficulties for the international community in tackling disarmament and arms control challenges. An important emphasis of the project is to communicate its research findings to multilateral practitioners.

## D. Arms transparency

10. In addition to the standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. In that resolution the Assembly called upon all Member States to provide data annually for inclusion in the Register on imports and exports and invited Member States, pending the expansion of the Register, to provide to the Secretary-General with their annual report on imports and exports of arms, available background information regarding their military holdings, procurement through national production and relevant policies. The introduction of simplified reporting mechanisms has facilitated the participation of Member States in the Register, with 75 Member States providing information under the standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures and 115 States submitting data to the Register. It is also noteworthy that some States enclosed their defence white papers and defence policy papers as part of their additional background information to the Register.

11. In addition, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/66 on national legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has set up an online database[5] containing information provided by Member States on their national legislation, regulations and procedures on the transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology, as well as the changes therein, and has made it accessible to all Member States. To date, a total of 31 States have submitted information, which is included in the database.

12. Furthermore, pursuant to resolution 59/92 on information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms, the Office for Disarmament Affairs set up an online database[6] containing information provided by Member States on confidence-building measures already taken in the field of conventional arms. Over 30 reports are included in the database.

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[4] *Alternative Approaches in Multilateral Decision Making: Disarmament as Humanitarian Action* (United Nations publication, Sales No. GV.E.05.08); *Disarmament as Humanitarian Action: From Perspective to Practice* (United Nations publication, Sales No. GV.E.06.09); *Thinking Outside the Box in Multilateral Disarmament and Arms Control Negotiations* (United Nations publication, Sales No. GV.E.06.0.16).

[5] http://disarmament2.un.org/cab/NLDU%202007/NLDUindex.html.

[6] http://disarmament2.un.org/cab/cbm.html.

# III. Activities undertaken by the United Nations related to the recommendations of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development

## A. Assessing security needs of States promoting transparency and confidence

13. UNIDIR is currently developing a security needs assessment protocol, intended to complement the work of the joint assessment missions conducted by the United Nations and the World Bank, which could be of use to the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission. It is designed for the timely provision of culturally specific security-building knowledge. The system will assist field managers in the design and planning of security-related development and humanitarian activities. A related publication, entitled *The Security Needs Assessment Protocol: Improving Operational Effectiveness through Community Security*, is available at the UNIDIR website[7] and a conference on the subject was held in Geneva in June 2008.[8]

## B. Mainstreaming and promoting a disarmament and development perspective

14. Collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resulted in integrating small arms and armed violence issues into national development planning processes/frameworks. Of the 81 current United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, nearly one half contain references to armed violence as a hindrance to development and one third include programmatic responses to addressing armed violence. These issues are also reflected, although to a slightly lesser degree, in the poverty reduction strategy papers. Many United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and poverty reduction strategy papers also include references to mine action programmes, emphasizing the significance of incorporating mine clearance activities into national development plans. The integration of armed violence reduction programmes into development frameworks and strategies is one of the many commitments undertaken by the signatories to the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, adopted in June 2006, which aims at achieving a measurable reduction in the global burden of armed violence by 2015.

## C. Facilitating research and dialogue

15. As one of the specialized research bodies of the organization, UNIDIR conducts research on disarmament and security with the aim of assisting the international community in their disarmament thinking, decisions and efforts, in particular by connecting cross-cutting issues that support the Organization's objectives of building peace and security, such as disarmament, human rights,

[7] www.unidir.ch/pdf/ouvrages/pdf-1-92-9045-008-E-en.pdf.

[8] Community Security and Operational Effectiveness, 16 June 2008, Palais des Nations, Geneva.

institutional assistance and development. Some of the activities of the Institute in this regard are outlined above (see paras. 5, 9 and 13).

## D. Destruction of surplus weapons

16. The United Nations facilitates and promotes various surplus weapons/ammunition destruction programmes. UNDP supports the development of national plans and capacities to destroy and dispose of weapons from surplus stockpiles, including the development of technical plans and capacities, the identification and acquisition of required equipment and infrastructure, identification of appropriate destruction methods and development of training material. For example, UNDP and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe undertook the destruction of almost 10,000 tons of ammunition in Montenegro in February 2007 and UNDP supported large-scale ammunition destruction in Uganda in July and November 2007. In addition, various training courses, seminars and workshops have been facilitated by the Lima-based United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean that focus on, or have included, the destruction of surplus weapons/ammunition, including most recently a seminar/training course on the subject held in Costa Rica in September 2007.

## E. Conflict prevention

17. The Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration continues to promote the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards. The Working Group set up three sub-working groups on training, socio-economic reintegration and HIV/AIDS, as well as one on exploring ways to incorporate the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards in these areas. The Working Group is also publishing the French version of the Standards to meet the needs of Francophone countries and is working with a range of partners to develop new guidance on linkages between disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts and security sector reform, transitional justice and the peace processes.

18. Pursuant to the presidential statement issued by the Security Council on 29 June 2007 (S/PRST/2007/24), the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, on a biennial basis beginning in 2008, a report containing analysis, observations and recommendations on the issue of small arms as well as observations on the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. A report of the Secretary-General on small arms (S/2008/258), issued in April 2008, included a set of recommendations. The report puts particular emphasis on the impact of the issue of small arms on development. It contextualizes illicit small arms trade within the broader concepts of conflict, armed violence and firearms control. It supports the initiative by a large group of States through the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development which is aimed, inter alia, at developing quantitative indicators for measuring the impact of small arms. The report calls for increasing synergies between various actors, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission and peacekeeping

missions on the ground. All States and concerned parties are encouraged to follow up on the recommendations contained in the report.

19. Since its inception in 1997, the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures has sought to fill a gap in the existing disarmament agenda, in particular in the field of small arms control projects. After the adoption in 2001 of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Group focused its efforts on matching needs with resources. Notwithstanding these efforts, States have continued to indicate that more comprehensive implementation support in the field of small arms control programming is needed. The United Nations is therefore developing a web-based management tool which would build on the work done through the Group and the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism. The Programme of Action-Implementation Support System, launched in July 2008, aims to establish a comprehensive information management system in the area of small arms. This system encompasses a database of requests for assistance and a tool for matching needs and resources, and also functions as a clearing-house for project proposals. In addition, the Small Arms Advisory Network, an online community-operated system, facilitates a worldwide exchange of advice and experiences.

## IV. Information received from Governments

20. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 62/48, the General Assembly invited Member States to provide the Secretary-General with information regarding measures and efforts to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development. Pursuant to that request, a note verbale dated 15 February 2008 was sent to Member States requesting this information. To date, replies have been received from the following States: Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Qatar and Serbia. These replies are summarized below. Any further replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

### Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[11 June 2008]

Disarmament and development are two of the most urgent challenges facing the world today. Global military expenditure is in dramatic contrast to economic and social underdevelopment and to the misery and poverty afflicting more than two thirds of mankind.

The growing and alarming arms race, which already accounts for over one trillion dollars in spending, is absorbing far too great a proportion of the world's human, financial, natural and technological resources, placing a heavy burden on the economies of all countries and affecting the international flow of trade, finance and technology.

The conclusion of the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/65 adopted in 2002 to study the topic in the current

international climate that, after a slight reduction during the 1990s, global military expenditure has been rising steadily since 2001, is worth highlighting.

As a result of such expenditure, there has been a rise in defence budgets worldwide, fostering a climate of insecurity, fear and mistrust.

In September 2006, Cuba was elected Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, which has staunchly advocated the need to end the insane arms race and for developed countries to contribute to the sustainable development of developing countries by releasing a portion of the resources devoted to the arms race.

Cuba reiterates its proposal for the establishment of a fund administered by the United Nations into which at least half of current military expenditure would be paid in order to meet the economic and social development requirements of needy countries. In addition to its obvious usefulness, this initiative could be very valuable as a confidence-building measure and would be a determining factor in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Cuba also reiterates its support for the Plan of Action adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development held in September 1987, which includes the commitment to allocate a portion of the resources released through disarmament for purposes of socio-economic development. Cuba also reiterates its support for the discussion of this topic by the United Nations General Assembly and for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the relevant resolutions.

## Dominican Republic

[Original: Spanish]
[5 May 2008]

1. By Decree No. 389-00 of 24 July 2000, the President of the Republic prohibited the import of firearms, spare parts and ammunition for the purpose of trade with individuals.

2. Pursuant to that measure, the budgets of the Armed Forces of the Dominican Republic for 2007 and 2008 did not allocate funds for the acquisition of weapons of war or heavy weapons, which are defined in article 2, paragraph 2, of Act No. 36 on the trade in and the carriage and ownership of firearms.

3. The Armed Forces, through their various units and institutions, regulate and are responsible for the inspection and storage of firearms, ammunition and explosives imported into the Dominican Republic, pursuant to Act No. 36 of 19 October 1965 on the trade in and the carriage and ownership of firearms (Official Gazette No. 8950). Article 2 of Act No. 36 stipulates that, except where permitted by this Act, it is prohibited for anyone to produce, import, purchase or acquire, by any means, firearms, spare parts or components and ammunition or primers for these items; to hold these items in their possession or custody; to sell or to dispose of these items in any form; or to carry these items.

4. Please also be informed that article 39 of the aforementioned Act authorizes us to implement measures aimed at the seizure and control of firearms, ammunitions, explosives or any munitions in contravention of its provisions, should such items be detected by our intelligence services and/or during security checks put in place to

monitor transport systems for people and vehicles or other activities carried out within the territory of our land, sea and air borders.

5. Regarding the transfer of military equipment, once such equipment is withdrawn from our inventories, the equipment not used as museum exhibits is destroyed in the presence of the competent authorities while implementing the relevant security and environmental measures.

## Lebanon

[Original: English]
[23 April 2008]

Lebanon supports the international agreements concerning disarmament and arms control. However, Lebanon has never received any resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to enhance economic and social development. Despite this situation and the actual security and military circumstances, and despite the numerous operational missions carried out by the Lebanese Army on the borders and within the country, especially to implement Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), Lebanon continues to devote all available means for economic and social development.

## Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[7 April 2008]

The State of Qatar enjoys a high level of stability and security, has good relations with all its neighbours, and is not involved in regional conflicts. The State of Qatar only possesses conventional weapons, and has acceded to all treaties banning weapons of mass destruction. The State of Qatar only possesses such conventional weapons as are necessary for its security given the prevailing conditions in the region. Its arms expenditures are only a small fraction of its national budget, owing to sensible policies and well-developed maintenance programmes that optimize the use of existing weapons. Development and infrastructure of all kinds also receive a great amount of care and attention.

## Serbia

[Original: English]
[21 May 2008]

All resources accrued from the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements are credited to the budget of the Republic of Serbia. However, no information is available about the percentage of the resources being devoted to economic and social development.